Guidelines for Delivering Quality Palliative Care

TABLE 3
Areas of Palliative Care Requiring Regular Assessment and Documentation

AREA	*EXAMPLES*
Physical	Pain; nonpainful symptoms (e.g., shortness of breath, nausea, fatigue, weakness, anorexia, insomnia, anxiety, depression, confusion, constipation); treatment side effects; functional capacities; treatment efficacy and alternatives (and patient and family preferences)
Psychological	Understanding of the illness and its consequences; care-giving needs or capacity; stress; grief and bereavement risks for the patient and family (i.e., depression and comorbid complications); coping strategies
Social	Family structure and geographic location; cultural concerns and needs; finances; sexuality; living arrangements; caregiver availability; access to transportation; access to prescription and over-the-counter medicines
Spiritual	Spiritual background, beliefs, and practices of the patient and family; hopes and fears; life completion tasks; wishes regarding care setting for death

Information from National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care. Clinical practice guidelines for quality palliative care. Accessed online February 21, 2006, at:http://www.nationalconsensusproject.org/Guidelines_Download.asp.

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